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WST 4309G-001 / ENG 4775-001: Studies in Literary and Cultural Criticism and Theory: Feminist Theory

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ENGLISH 4775/WST4309
STUDIES IN LITERARY AND CULTURAL CRITICISM AND THEORY:
FEMINIST THEORY

Professor: Dr. Marjorie Worthington
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Class: MWF 1:00-1:50pm, Coleman Hall 3609

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Texts: *Feminist Theory: A Reader*, Kolmar & Bartkowski, Frances (listed on schedule as "FT")
The Handmaid's Tale, Margaret Atwood
Some materials by email.

Course Objectives include (but are not limited to):

- Reading and discussing various forms of feminist theory and criticism
- Learning the issues and vocabulary relevant to this theory and criticism.
- Learning to write effectively with and about this theory and criticism
- Developing an understanding of how these ideas relate to the study of literature.
- Developing an understanding of how these ideas relate to the world at large.

By the end of the course, students be able:

1. To demonstrate critical thinking about gender issues.
2. To articulate how political, social, economic, and/or religious factors influence gender role expectations.
3. To demonstrate awareness of comparative gender differences within and across cultures and subcultures.
4. To demonstrate an appreciation of the diverse experiences and perspectives that shape human culture, in service of global citizenship.
5. To demonstrate understanding of the historical development and/or contemporary applications of feminist theory.
6. To demonstrate the ability to speak and write clearly.

REQUIREMENTS: YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS TO PASS THIS COURSE.

Short Essays (5 @ 50 points each): You will need to write 5 essays over the course of the semester. I will give you the topics; the due dates are listed on the syllabus. On the day these are due, you'll need to be prepared to discuss your ideas in class on that day. Regardless of the topic I assign, each of these essays should have a thesis statement and should engage analytically with the ideas from the readings. You should make an *argument* about what you have read.

NOTE: The fourth essay (due Friday, March 8) will be about the Women's History Month event scheduled to take place on Tuesday, March 4 at 7:00pm. In order to write the essay, **you will be required to attend this free event.** Mark your calendars now and make appropriate plans to be available on this night.

Midterm (200 points) and Final Exam (250 points): These will consist of short-answer and essay questions with a take-home component.

Theory Essay (100 points): For this essay, you will write a 6-7-page, *thesis-driven* essay that engages directly with one or more of the readings of the course. You should not use outside sources for this essay, only those we have read in class, and you should devise some kind of thesis argument that directly

addresses those texts. In other words, analyze and evaluate the argument(s) the text is making, or compare two or more different texts in order to make an argument about them.

FOR THE ENGLISH MAJORS: Literary Criticism Essay (200 points): For this essay, you will need to do outside literary research, using one of the databases we will discuss in class. You will need to find **three** critical articles that make a **gender** argument of some kind about a single **literary** text. By “critical articles” I mean articles found in academic journals or books, NOT encyclopedias, Cliffs or Sparks notes, or web sources like Wikipedia. Please do not hesitate to see me if you are having trouble finding articles; we can work with the databases together. By “gender argument,” I mean an argument that takes issues of gender into account in some way. So you need three different articles that make arguments about gender. For some literary works, such articles would not be difficult to find; for some, it would be impossible. Once you find and read these articles, you will analyze them in a 6-7-page essay.

FOR ALL OTHER MAJORS: Delve into the database(s) that store academic articles in your field and look for topics related to gender. If you do not know what sources to use, ask a professor in your major, and then come talk to me about how to search for articles. Discern a topic within your discipline that is related to gender issues and find three articles that connect to that topic. Write a 6-7-page essay which discusses what these articles argue, what the salient issues are related to gender in the topic you chose, and which argument(s) you find the strongest.

POLICIES:

Attendance: Your consistent attendance and participation are necessary to make this class the vibrant exchange of ideas it should be and I take attendance every day (even if you do not see me doing it). You are permitted no more than three unexcused absences. Each unexcused absence after three will lower your **final** grade by thirty points (3%). Excused absences are accompanied by appropriate legal or medical documentation.

Conferences: The hours listed above are times when I will be in my office ready to meet with students. You can also make a special appointment to see me if you are unable to come during office hours. I encourage you to come and talk to me about your work as often as you like.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as appropriating words or ideas that are not your own without giving proper credit. The temptation to plagiarize can be great, particularly in the advent of extensive computer technology and the collaborative nature of our class. However, the consequences of plagiarism are dire and can result in a grade of F for the assignment and even for the course. It will also result in a report to the Judicial Affairs Office.

Disabilities: If you have a documented disability, let me know what accommodations you require.

Cell Phone Policy: Turn them off before class begins. This should go without saying.

Grade Breakdown:

Short Essays (5 @ 50 points each)	250
Midterm Exam	200
Theory Essay	100
Literary Criticism/Major Field Essay	200
Final Exam	250

ENG 4775 READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Jan. 7 M Introduction
9 W FT 9 Wollstonecraft

"THE FIRST WAVE" – EARLY FEMINISM AND THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

11 F FT 11-Stanton, FT 17-Anthony

14 M FT 15-Mill, FT 12-Taylor

16 W FT 14-Truth, FT 19-Douglass

18 F FT 23-Gilman

Short Essay #1 due

WOMEN AND ECONOMICS

21 M **NO CLASS, MLK DAY**

23 W FT 40-de Beauvoir

25 F FT 42-Friedan

28 M FT 59-Rubin

MOTHERHOOD AND FAMILY PLANNING

30 W FT 49- FT 30-Sanger, Firestone
Feb. 1 F FT 54-Ortner, FT 91-Davis

4 M FT 66 Chodorow

Short Essay #2 due

6 W Dr. Jeannie Ludlow: "Abortion is a Motherhood Issue"

BODIES

8 F FT 65-Irigaray, Email-Bordo

FEMINISM AND RACE

11 M FT 2-Walker, FT 85-hooks

13 W FT 90-Hill Collins

15 F **NO CLASS: LINCOLN B'DAY**

FEMINISM AND LANGUAGE

18 M FT 56-Cixous, FT 57-Lakoff

Short Essay #3 due

20 W FT 67-Daly

22 F FT 83-Scott, FT 84-Fuss

25 M **Midterm Exam**

POSTCOLONIALISM

27 W FT 80-Anzaldua
March 1 F FT 75-Mohanty

SEXUALITY

4 M FT 69-Lorde, FT 70-Wittig

Tuesday, March 5, 7:00pm: "Searching for Clio: Women and Public Memory"

6 W FT 71-Rich, FT 87-MacKinnon
8 F FT 89-Butler

Short Essay #4 due

SPRING BREAK

LITERATURE AND FILM

18 M Email- Gilbert & Gubar, Robinson
20 W Email- Fetterley
22 F Email- Radway

25 M Email- Showalter, Kolodny
27 W Email-McKay, Christian
29 F FT 61-Mulvey

Theory Essay Due

April 1 M Email- DeLauretis
3 W Email- Clover
5 F Email- Roof

8 M Atwood, Chaps. I-IX (pp.3-147)
10 W Atwood, Chaps. X-XII (pp.151-255)
12 F Atwood, Chaps. XIII-end

MASCULINITY

15 M Email-Sedgwick
17 W Email-Jeffords, Email- Wilson
19 F FT 74-Gilligan

Short Essay#5 due

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

22 M FT 78-Harding, FT 92-Fox Keller
24 W FT 76-Haraway
26 F Email-Balsamo

Major-Specific Scholarship Essay due

Wed., May 1, 12:30-2:30 – FINAL EXAM